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GENEALOGY
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ANNUAL REPORT 2000

The Mission of the Putnam County Historical Society & Foundry School Museum is to collect and preserve historical and cultural materials pertaining to the Philipstown area, the West Point Foundry and Putnam County, and to make such materials available to the public. To fulfill this mission, the Society maintains and administers the Foundry School Museum, archives, a library, and genealogical records; provides regulated public access to its collections; and plans, develops and presents informational and educational programs for the public.

GENEALOGY DEPT.

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A MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

To the Members and Friends of the Putnam County Historical Society
& Foundry School Museum:

The year 2000 was an important one for the Historical Society as we continue to improve our facilities, services and accessibility to the community. To cite four important achievements of 2000:

- We mounted our first professionally curated exhibit, "*Poetic Joining: The Hudson River & The Highlands*," in which many extraordinary examples of Hudson River paintings from local private collections were displayed together with others from our own collection and the West Point Museum. This was a first-class exhibit, and we intend to publish a catalogue for future reference. We are extremely grateful to the private collectors and to the West Point Museum for making this exhibit possible.
- We engaged our first professional Curator, Dr. Trudie Alexis Grace, who comes to us with a distinguished background as an art historian, lecturer, panelist, and most recently Assistant Curator at the National Academy of Design. Trudie, who was Guest Curator for *Poetic Joining*, has already begun many of the curatorial tasks that need to be accomplished to improve the preservation, protection, accessibility, and display of our many collections. Charlotte Eaton, our Curator for the past 12 years, retired at the end of 2000 but has agreed to be available for special projects and in general to maintain her close connection to the Historical Society.
- We developed a Master Plan for preserving the historic Foundry Schoolhouse building and constructing new museum space better suited than the current Museum for preserving and displaying our collections. This exciting proposal, on which several Trustees have spent a great deal of time and effort, particularly the distinguished architect Lee Harris Pomeroy, is described in detail on page 7.
- We increased our grant revenue significantly, thanks to the efforts of Susan Auslander, our consultant on grants. We received State and County grants with the inestimable help of our State Senator and Assemblyman, Vincent Leibell and Willis Stephens, our County Legislator, Vinny Tamagna, and County Executive Bob Bondi.

We continue to work closely as Scenic Hudson's partner in developing their master plan for the West Point Foundry Preserve in Cold Spring. We consider this relationship to be extremely important to the future of the Historical Society and the Foundry Preserve, and we will continue to devote time and effort to ensure its success.

In the Fall, we honored one of our longest-serving and most dedicated volunteers, Elizabeth Todd Healey, who has served as Trustee, President, Board Chairman, and Chairman of Volunteers and Docents during her 44 years as a member of the Historical Society, by awarding her the first Elizabeth Todd Healy Volunteer Service Award. Libby and the other volunteers are the backbone of the Historical Society, permitting us be open on weekends, to mount exhibits, to run programs, to publish our newsletter, and otherwise to operate and serve the community.

During 2000 John P. (Pat) Dugan joined our Board of Trustees to fill the vacancy left by the resignation of Hugh Muir in connection with his relocation to Washington DC. Pat had been a member of the Long-Range Planning Committee, where his advice and counsel were extremely valuable, and I look forward to working with him on our Board of Trustees.

I want to thank our dedicated and hard-working staff led by Doris Shaw, who has continued to demonstrate vision, leadership, dedication, creativity and grace as our Executive Director. During the year Doris was ably assisted and supported by Charlotte Eaton, in her last year as Curator, Heidi Burgunder, who joined our staff as Office Manager, and Athena Bleakley, our office assistant.

Robert C. Bickford
President

BOARD OF TRUSTEES

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Research: Minette Gunther
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West Point Foundry: Ralph Brill
At Large: Richard Saunders

STAFF

Executive Director: Doris Shaw
Curator: Trudie Alexis Grace
Office Manager: Heidi Burgunder; Office Assistant: Athena Bleakley

2000 IN REVIEW

CURATOR:

ACQUISITIONS: Artifacts committee (Betty Green, Chair, and Riva Castleman, Betsy Calhoun, with Charlotte Eaton, Curator): During the year the Society acquired some lantern slides, a spy glass, a ceramic jug, Persian rug, glass handle dipper, a flint gun and a beautifully framed engraving of General Putnam. In addition, through the generosity of the Belcher family we acquired three Robert Weir original sketches, a chair from the Garrison Ferry and two ferry-boat lanterns, and portraits of Col. and Mrs. Taylor Belcher.

Historical records committee (Minette Gunther, Chair, and John Calabro, David Gordon, Janet Rust, with the Curator): An original West Point Foundry patent and drawing and several other documents were acquired.

EXHIBITS: The Spring exhibit of West Point Foundry Original Designs and Documents included materials loaned by The New-York Historical Society and items from our own collection that guest archivist Victoria Powell had recently catalogued. The Summer exhibit, "Historic Houses of Putnam County," was a tribute to Irma Franklin, the Society's Historian for over 20 years, who had taken photographs of many historic houses in the 1960's. The Fall exhibit was "Poetic Joining: The Hudson River & The Highlands. 19th Century Paintings From Private & Public Collections" in which the Society's collection was augmented by paintings on loan from generous Philipstown residents and the West Point Museum.

SCHOOL PROGRAM: About 200 fourth-grade children from five schools in Putnam and Dutchess Counties visited the Society last year to learn about life in the 19th century. The dedicated volunteers, Sally Singh, Minette Gunther and Nancy Sayles-Evarts, with Curator Charlotte Eaton, make the program possible. In the Spring, seventh graders of Haldane and Garrison Schools participated in our Annual Jean Saunders History Contest chaired by Jini Hall. Some of the outstanding entries were donated to our history research collection.

HISTORIAN:

RESEARCH FACILITIES: Many genealogy requests arrived by letter, fax and e-mail in part due to the Society's new Website. Research volunteer Lillian McGuinness, Audrey Ridpath, Bernadette Rome, and Minette Gunther, the Society's historian, dispatched almost 300 responses. Visiting researchers were assisted by the volunteers and by the curator and staff.

RESEARCH ARTICLES: *The Nimham Times Magazine* published a story about the Mekeel's Corners Chapel and a review of *The West Point Foundry and the Parrott Gun*, by Charles Isleib and Jack Chard, who researched the Foundry material at the Society. Several articles for *Foundry Castings* were written by the historian.

LIBRARY: During 2000, we removed from our shelves nearly 75 obsolete volumes. Those that have been archived and are valuable will be stored elsewhere. Our card catalogue has been revised to provide better access to information. Several new books on local history have been acquired, bringing the total number of books in our library to over 2,000 and additional purchases are planned for 2001.

PROGRAMS: Several guest speakers delivered outstanding programs which were well attended and enthusiastically received. Ralph Brill presented an anecdotal history of the West Point Foundry; Jean Marzollo shared some "I Spy" secrets; Stacy Matson-Zuvic, Pam Colangelo and Al Zgolinski enlightened members on the genesis of the Cold Spring Historic District; Don Nice talked about his relationship as an artist with the Hudson River Valley; and Irène O'Garden and Pam Colangelo inspired a group of children to create their own versions of Hudson River paintings and poems.

EVENTS: One of the highpoints of the season was the Pic-nic at Fair Oaks Farm, a salute to Thomas Rossiter's painting, "A Pic-nic on the Hudson," which was in the Society's care while the Butterfield Library was undergoing renovation. The picnic was a great success and the Library shared in the proceeds. The summer Lawn Party at Windway, home of Irene O'Garden and John Pielmeier, was enhanced by an exhibit of works by Kenneth Frazier, the original owner of this charming villa. Irene, poet and artist, added her delightful talents to a magical event. Trustee Jim Johnson, Military Historian of the Hudson River Valley, has kept us mindful of the historical setting in which we operate and particularly of the events that began 225 years ago with the American Revolution. In September at our third annual gala we celebrated the 1775 fortification of Fort Constitution, what we now call Constitution Island. The Society honored Lincoln Diamant, distinguished historian of the American Revolution; and the Fish family, which has long played an important part in the history of the Hudson Valley, the State of New York and this nation.

JEAN SAUNDERS ANNUAL HISTORY CONTEST 2000: Fifty-one seventh graders from Haldane and Garrison schools participated. For three months students, teachers, administrators, parents and Society staff and volunteers were involved in this annual learning experience exploring the heritage of this region. Winners were announced at a reception for students and friends. The winners were: Billy Durr, Brian Crimmins & Brian Rubino, and Elizabeth Benjamin & Hannah Anderson.

HERITAGE WAY WALKING TOURS: Twenty-two Sunday afternoon tours were conducted in the Village of Cold Spring from May 21st to November 5th. Approximately 154 persons participated, and the tours were met with great enthusiasm. During this period a new tour guide, Cynthia Murray, was trained and led one tour. Unfortunately, we have lost the services of Hugh Muir who has played a critical role in this program. We will also be losing another tour guide, Clare Capossela, who has been with us for several years. Attendance was a bit lower than in the previous year and the Committee is considering ways to encourage a larger audience for this valuable service.

DOCENTS & VOLUNTEERS: Libby Healy chairs the volunteer docents who greet visitors on Saturdays and Sundays. Ginny Monahan and Mike Klubnick have been the weekend regulars, assisted by Mercedes Alden, Veronica Lahey, Karen Lindros, Margaret Mills, Sally Peparo, Alice Schatzle, Sally Singh, and Margaret Whelan. There is also a back-up team of busy people who have served the Society for many years and help when they can including Maggie and David Gordon, Betty Green, and Minette Gunther, who is a walking encyclopedia of local history. In future years the Elizabeth Todd Healy Volunteer Service award will give our volunteers recognition for their many hours contributed to the Society.

MEMBERSHIP: Our membership list has 556 names which translates to about 1,000 members. The Society enjoys an active constituency which helps support the programs, events and collections. Ginny Monahan has spent many hours updating and reorganizing the records, a never-ending process.

LONG RANGE PLANNING/ MASTER PLAN IMPLEMENTATION COMMITTEE: After extensive interviews with community officials and public-spirited individuals, and consultation with architectural, financial and development professionals, the Committee developed a Master Plan proposal for the Society's future which was adopted by the Trustees in September and is summarized herein. The Committee's name was changed to the Master Plan Implementation Committee.

RESOURCE & DEVELOPMENT: The committee met every six weeks to discuss ongoing development matters - increasing membership, increasing donations, review of prospect lists, cultivation of new members - and to plan fundraising events and activities, including membership renewal mailings, a summer lawn party, a first-time historic picnic (co-sponsored by Butterfield Library), an annual riverside fall gala, a Thanksgiving service and dinner, and an end-of-year appeal mailing. Proceeds from these activities generated approximately \$30,000 net toward the operating expenses. The committee also worked with fundraising consultant Susan Auslander, who obtained almost \$36,000 in grant contributions from public and private sources for exhibition expenses, printed materials, and staffing.

PUBLICITY & MARKETING: Publicity activities in 2000 included (but were not limited to) issuance of more than 20 news releases, disseminated to a half-dozen local and regional newspapers on a regular basis and other outlets on a selective basis.

"River of Inspiration," an important article in *Hudson Valley Magazine* heralding the opening of the "Poetic Joining" exhibition, generated visits by art, history, and Hudson River aficionados who might otherwise not have toured the museum. Likewise, articles and calendar announcements in the local press helped draw attendees to the programs, such as the presentations by art professor Sister Sylvia Bielen and artist Don Nice, part of the Poetic Joining exhibit.

BUILDINGS AND GROUNDS: After a study, it was determined that a new heating and air conditioning system to meet the museum's needs could be installed for approximately \$80,000. The Trustees decided to postpone this in light of the Society's Master Plan Proposal for expansion. Al Zgolinski has designed a shelter for the Parrott Gun to be erected on the triangle across Chestnut St., for which a grant has been received from Putnam County due largely to the efforts of Vinny Tamagna. The Village of Cold Spring has arranged to provide archival storage space in the Village Highway Department for the West Point Foundry artifacts that have been stored in Orange County. The collection, owned by Scenic Hudson Inc., is to be moved to Cold Spring in 2001. The Historical Society will maintain the material and make it accessible for researchers until moved to a permanent exhibit space. We are grateful to Mayor Anthony Phillips and the Village Board for making this possible.

BUILDING ON HISTORY: SUMMARY OF THE MASTER PLAN PROPOSAL

Overview

For ninety-five years, the Putnam County Historical Society & Foundry School Museum has been celebrating the historic legacy of the Hudson Highlands region. The Highlands played a major role in the development of our nation's social, cultural, and environmental history.

The society's collections reach from the prehistoric era to Native American culture, to the Revolutionary period, to the 19th-century flourishing of the West Point Foundry and artistic and literary genres inspired by the Hudson River, to the profound social changes of the 20th century including the modern environmental movement. As it prepares for its second century, the Society is planning a major restoration of the existing Foundry Schoolhouse and construction of a new, state-of-the-art Museum to house and display its collections and provide an entirely new museum experience at its current site on Chestnut Street in Cold Spring.

With the new facility, the Society will be an important destination for visitors to the Highlands as well as a gateway to Scenic Hudson's West Point Foundry Preserve and the many other public sites in the Hudson Highlands.

Moreover, the Society's mission of preserving and interpreting the history of the West Point Foundry, the Philipstown area, and Putnam County, establishes it as a key contributor to collaborative regional efforts. As the framework for the Hudson River Valley National Heritage Area is being planned, the Society, with its new museum, will be uniquely positioned to provide new opportunities to connect the public with their heritage.

Opportunities Created

The proposed enhancement and expansion will allow the Society to better fulfill its role as steward of the fascinating stories of the mid-Hudson region and the people who found a home on the River's shores. For the first time, the Society will be able to offer:

- interactive, interpretive exhibits & information retrieval systems
- sufficient space for presenting its impressive collections (many of which are currently in storage or on long term loan)
- adequate preservation & conservation of material culture.
- scholarship and archaeological study opportunities, and
- upgraded research tools and accessibility for scholars

For the community, the Society's new facilities also will be a welcome and appropriate model of small-scale economic development, preserving history, conserving land, and increasing local employment opportunities.

Funding

The Society estimates that the cost of its construction-related activities will be approximately \$4 to \$5 million, and additional funding to ensure an adequate endowment for operations and related development. The Society intends to conduct a major capital campaign for these purposes and invites the public to participate in this important effort.

STATEMENT OF ACTIVITIES

	<u>2000</u>	<u>1999</u>
	\$	\$
Revenue		
Interest and Dividends	24,538	30,874
Donations	21,213	25,169
Membership Dues	19,300	16,650
Museum Store	3,480	2,532
Special Event Revenue	13,570	15,957
Other Operating Revenue	<u>1,115</u>	<u>577</u>
Total Revenues	83,216	131,759
Expenses		
Building & Grounds	14,943	12,259
Curatorial	9,054	16,619
Special Event Expense	13,372	16,402
Other Operating Expenses	32,876	37,037
Payroll Expenses	47,161	<u>41,247</u>
Total Expenses	<u>117,406</u>	<u>123,564</u>
Net Ordinary Income	(34,190)	8,195
Other Income/Expense		
Other Income		
Gain on Sale of Land		13,999
Investment Gain (Loss) (unrealized)	(3,662)	<u>50,782</u>
Total Other Income	<u>(3,662)</u>	<u>64,781</u>
Net Other Income	<u>(3,662)</u>	<u>64,781</u>
Change in Net Assets	<u>(37,852)</u>	<u>72,976</u>



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